

Honorable Representatives,

Today you will take up HB 5580 in the House Great Lakes Committee, legislation that will create a moratorium on new digital billboards. I may not be able to make the committee meeting, and wanted to provide you with some information about this issue from the perspective of communities around the state.

The Michigan Municipal League is supportive of this legislation. We believe that there are issues of public safety to be considered with regards to digital billboards, and the Legislature should put a temporary hold on new digital billboards while the federal study is completed. Once that is done, standards can be passed specifically for digital billboards in relation to motion, brightness, and other important issues.

If the moratorium is not passed first while the study is completed and the regulations are finalized, local units of government will face the possibility of having non-conforming billboards that will be grandfathered in from before the regulations took place. These billboards could be a public safety threat and could be costly to municipalities to be brought into compliance.

The attached email from the city planner of the City of Grand Rapids gives good clarification on this issue. Several other communities have also created electronic regulations of signs, and this is a concern among many municipalities.

I hope to make it to the committee today and to testify on this legislation, but I wanted you to have this information in the event that I cannot make it. If you would like to discuss this further before committee, please feel free to contact me on my cell phone at (517) 256-3395.

Thank you.

Andy

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